

S^r William D'avenant's

VOYAGE

T O T H E

Other World:

With His Adventures in the
Poets *ELIZIUM*.

A Poetical Fiction.

LONDON,

Printed for the Author, 1668.

VOYAGE

THE

East India

Company

of

London

Printed

London

Printed for the Author

(3)

The Author to the

READER.

I Write onely for my self and private friends ; and none prints more, and publishes less than I : nor had I printed this , but onely to let you see how Innocent it is, which others make so Criminal. I make my self merry with the world sometimes as one who has no business in it to make me sad ; and use onely a little Poetical Licence, which in all times with private persons , so you spare the publick, has been allow'd: And if any ask, why with this person in particular ? I answer, 'twas a sub-

A 2

ject

(4)

ject offer'd me for the present ; and that is all. As superlative praises come too nigh Flattery : So superlative dispraises come too nigh Malignity ; from either of which I am equally remov'd. I'm sure none are more careful than my self, to give no scandal nor offence in what I write; and if any will needs take it before 'tis given, and are so dull not to understand Wit, nor know how to distinguish betwixt Railing & Railerie, let them take Hellebore.

Sir

(5)



Sir William D'avenant's Voyage
TO THE
Other World:

With his Adventures in the
Poets ELIZIUM.

SIr WILLIAM D'AVENANT being
dead, not a Poet would afford him so
much as an Elegie; whether because
he sought to make a Monopoly of the
Art, or strove to become Rich in spite
of Minerva: It being with Poets as with Mush-
rooms, which grow onely on barren ground, in-

A3

rich

(6)

rich the Soyl once, and they degenerate : Onely
one, more Humane than the rest, accompany'd
him to his Grave with this Elogium.

*Now Davenant's dead, the Stage will
And all to Barbarism turn : (mourn,
Since He it was this later Age,
Who chiefly civiliz'd the Stage.*

*Great was his Wit, his Fancy great,
As e're was any Poets yet :
And more Advantage none e'er made
O'th' Wit and Fancy which he had.*

*Not onely Dedalus Arts he knew,
But even Prometheus's too :
And living Machins made of Men,
As well as dead ones, for the Scene.*

*And if the Stage or Theatre be
A little World, 'twas chiefly he,
That Atlas-like supported it,
By force of Industry and Wit.*

All

(7)

*All this, and more, he did beside,
Which having perfected, he dy'd :
If he may properly be said
To dy, whose Fame will ne'er be dead.*

Another went further yet, and using the privilege of your Antient Poets, who with almost as much certainty as your Divines, can tell all that passes in the other World : did thus Relate his Voyage thither, and all his Adventures in the Poets Elyzium.

A Severy one at the instant of their Deaths, have Passports given them for some place or other, he had his for the Poets Elyzium; which not without much difficulty he obtained from the Officers of Parnassus : For when he alleg'd, he was an Heroick Poet, they ask'd him why he did not continue it ? When he said he was a Dramatick too, they ask'd him why he left it off, and onely studied to get Money; like him who sold his Horse to buy him provender : And finally, when he added, He was a Poet Laureate, they laugh'd, and said, Bayes was never more cheap than now; and that since Petrarch's time, none had ever been legitimately crown'd.

A 4

Nor

Nor had he less difficulty with Charon, who hearing he was Rich, thought to make a Booty of him, and ask'd an extraordinary price for his passage over; but coming to payment, he found he was so poor, as he was ready to turn him back agen, he having hardly so much as his Naulum, or the price of every ordinary Passenger.

Being arriv'd, they were all much amaz'd to see him there, they having never heard of his being dead, neither by their Weekly Gazets, nor Cryers of Verses and Pamphlets up and down; (as common a Trade there, almost as it is here) nor was he less amaz'd than they, to find never a Poet there, Antient nor Modern, whom in some sort or other he had not disoblig'd by his discommendations, as Homer, Virgil, Tasso, Spencer, and especially Ben. Johnson; contrary to Plinies Rule, never to discommend any of the same profession with our selves: "For either
 "they are Better or Worse than you, (says he)
 "If Better, if they ben't worthy commendati-
 "ons, you much less; if worse, if they be wor-
 "thy commendations, you much more: So
 every ways advantagious 'tis for us to commend others. Nay even Shakespear, whom he thought to have found his greatest Friend, was as much offended with him as any of the rest, for so spoiling
 ing

ing and mangling of his Plays. But he who most vexed and tormented him, was his old Antagonist Jack Donn, who mock'd him with an hundred passages out of Gondibert; and after a world of other railing and spiteful language (at which the Doctor was excellent) so exasperated the Knight, at last, as they fell together by the ears: when but imagine

*What tearing Noses had been there,
Had they but Noses for to tear.*

Mean time the Comick Poets made a Ring about them, as Boys do when they hiss Dogs together by the ears; till at last they were separated by Pluto's Officers, as diligent to keep the peace and part the fray, as your Italian Sbirri, or Spanish Argruzelo; and so they drag'd them both away, the Doctor to the Stocks, for raising tumults and disturbances in Hell, and the Knight to the Tribunal, where Minos, Æacus and Rhadamanthus were to sit in Judgment on him, with Momus the Common Accuser of the Court.

Here

Here being arriv'd, and silence commanded,
 they ask'd him his Quality and Profession : To
 whom he answer'd, he was a Poet Laureate,
 who for Poetry in general had not his fellow a-
 live, and had left none to equal him now he was
 dead : And for Eloquence,

*How never any Hyperbolies
 Were higher, or farther stretch'd than his ;
 Nor ever Comparisons again
 Made things compar'd more clear & plain.*

Then for his Plays or Dramatick Poetry,
*How that of The Unfortunate Lovers,
 The depth of Tragedy discovers ;*

*In's Love and Honour you might see
 The height of Tragedy ;*

*And for his Wits, the Comick Fire
 In none yet ever flam'd up higher :*

But coming to his Siege of Rhodes,
It outwent all the rest by odds ;

And

*And somewhat's in't that does out-do
Both th' Antients and the Moderns too.*

To which Momus answered : That though they were never so good, it became not him to commend them as he did; That there were Faults enough to be found in them; And that he had mar'd more good Plays, than ever he had made; That all his Wit lay in Hyperbolies and Comparisons, which, when Accessory, were commendable enough, but when Principal, deserv'd no great commendations; That his Muse was none of the Nine, but onely a Mungril, or By-blow of Parnassus, and her Beauty rather sophisticate than natural; That he offer'd at Learning and Philosophy, but as Pullen and Stubble Geese offer'd to fly, who after they had flutter'd up a while, at length came fluttering down as fast agen; That he was with his high-sounding words, but like empty Hogsheds, the higher they sounded, the emptier still they were: And that, finally, he so perplex'd himself and Readers with Parenthesis on Parenthesis, as, just as in a wilderness or Labyrinth, all sense was lost in them.

As

(II)

As for his Life and Manners, they would not examine those, since 'twas suppos'd they were Licentious enough : onely he wou'd say,

He was a good Companion for

The Rich, but ill one for the poor;

On whom he look'd so, you'd believe

He walk'd with a Face Negative :

Whilst he must be a Lord at least,

For whom he'd smile or break a jeast.

And though this, and much more was exaggerated against him by Momus ; yet the Judges were so favourable to him, because he had left the Muses for Pluto, as they condemned him onely to live in Pluto's Court, to make him and Proserpina merry with his facetious Jeasts and Stories ; with whom in short time he became so gracious, by complying with their humours, and now and tan dressing a dish or two of meat for them, as they joyn'd him in Patent with Momus,

(13)

mus, and made him Superintendent of all their Sports and Recreations : So as, onely changing Place and Persons, he is now in as good Condition as he was before ; and lives the same Life there, as he did here.

F I N I S.

POSTSCRIPT.

POSTSCRIPT.

*To the Actors of the Theatre in
Lincolns-Inn-Fields.*

I Promised you a sight of what I had written of *Sir William D'avenant*, and now behold it here : By it you will perceive how much they abused you, who told you it was such an Abusive thing. If you like it not, take heed hereafter how you disoblige Him, who can not onely write for you, but against you too.

Rich. Flecknoe.

FINIS.